

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 25, 26, and 32-36 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof.

Please amend the claims without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof, as follows:

21. (Currently Amended) An isolated *Dirofilaria immitis* protein, wherein said *Dirofilaria immitis* protein is encoded by a nucleic acid molecule that hybridizes under conditions comprising (a) hybridizing in a solution comprising 17.53 grams of sodium chloride and 8.82 grams sodium citrate in 0.1 liters of water, pH 7 (2X SSC) in the absence of nucleic acid helix destabilizing agents, at a temperature of 37°C, and (b) washing in a solution comprising 8.765 grams of sodium chloride and 4.41 grams sodium citrate in 0.05 liters of water, pH 7 (1X SSC) in the absence of nucleic acid helix destabilizing agents at a temperature of 64°C, to a nucleic acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:2; and SEQ ID NO:5; ~~SEQ ID NO:7 and SEQ ID NO:10.~~

22. (Currently Amended) The protein of Claim 21, wherein said protein comprises an amino acid sequence that is at least about 95% identical to an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:4 and ~~SEQ ID NO:9~~; wherein determination of percent identity between molecules is made by a DNAsis™ computer program, using default parameters.

23. (Currently Amended) The protein of Claim 21, wherein said protein is encoded by a nucleic acid molecule having a nucleic acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:1; and SEQ ID NO:3; ~~SEQ ID NO:6 and SEQ ID NO:8.~~

E1  
C2 24. (Currently Amended) The protein of Claim 21, wherein said protein comprises an amino acid sequence ~~selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:4 and SEQ ID NO:9.~~

25. (Canceled).

26. (Canceled).

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C3 27. (Currently Amended) A composition comprising an excipient and a compound selected from the group consisting of: (a) an isolated *Dirofilaria immitis* protein, wherein said *Dirofilaria immitis* protein is encoded by a nucleic acid molecule that hybridizes under conditions comprising (a) hybridizing in a solution comprising 17.53 grams of sodium chloride and 8.82 grams sodium citrate in 0.1 liters of water, pH 7 (2X SSC) in the absence of nucleic acid helix destabilizing agents, at a temperature of 37°C, and (b) washing in a solution comprising 8.765 grams of sodium chloride and 4.41 grams sodium citrate in 0.05 liters of water, pH 7 (1X SSC) in the absence of nucleic acid helix destabilizing agents at a temperature of 64°C, to a nucleic acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:2, and SEQ ID NO:5, ~~SEQ ID NO:7 and SEQ ID NO:10~~, and (b) an isolated antibody that selectively binds to a protein having an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:4 and SEQ ID NO:9.

28. (Previously Added) The composition of Claim 27, wherein said composition further comprises a component selected from the group consisting of an adjuvant and a carrier.

29. (Currently Amended) The composition of Claim 27, wherein said protein comprises an amino acid sequence that is at least about 95% identical to an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:4 and SEQ ID NO:9, wherein determination of

percent identity between molecules is made by a DNAsis™ computer program, using default parameters.

30. (Currently Amended) The composition of Claim 27, wherein said protein is encoded by a nucleic acid molecule having a nucleic acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:1; and SEQ ID NO:3, ~~SEQ ID NO:6 and SEQ ID NO:8.~~

31. (Currently Amended) The composition of Claim 27, wherein said protein comprises an amino acid sequence ~~selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:4 and SEQ ID NO:9.~~

32-36 (Canceled).